Board has also taken up a Central Sector Scheme on "Studies of Recharge to Ground Water" on pilot basis. Assistance is also being extended to State Governments under Command Area Development (CAD) programme for bridging the gap between potential created and utilized. For meeting future requirements of water, as a long term measure, National Water Development Agency have formulated National Perspective Plan for water resources development which envisages interlinking various Peninsular rivers and Himalayan rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins.

Contaminated water

†4787. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many harmful chemicals such as arsenic, zinc etc. have been found in water in various parts of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that people are not only falling ill due to the consumption of such contaminated water but they are also suffering from other fatal diseases; and

(c) if so, the action being taken by Government for treatment of water in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY) : (a) As per studies carried out by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), under the Ministry of Water Resources, ground water in major parts of the country is by and large potable. However, ground water has been found contaminated in some parts of the country. The names of States and locations where ground water has been found contaminated and reasons thereof are given in enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(b) and (c) People in parts of West Bengal are suffering from arsenic dermotesis and other related problems. Provision of drinking water supply is the responsibility of the State Governments. The Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission has been assisting and guiding the States in provisioning of safe drinking water to rural areas under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and exclusive Sub-Mission programmes in areas having serious ground water quality problems like fluoride, iron, arsenic and brackishness. In such areas where ground water is unfit for drinking, safe drinking water is provided through alternative sources, either by tapping surface water or by undertaking remedial measures like de-fluoridation, iron and arsenic removal.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.